

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-6, 8, 10, 11, 13-30, 32-60, 63-70 and 72-80 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 2, 8, 10, 11, 13, 15-17, 20-26, 44, 59, 66-70, 78 and 79 are amended, and Claims 9, 12 and 71 are canceled without prejudice by the present amendment. Additionally, Claim 26 is rewritten in independent form by the present amendment..

In the outstanding Office Action, the drawings and the specification were objected to. Claims 2-6, 8, 25-30, 32-49, 63, 64, 68-70, 78 and 79 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101. Claims 2-6, 8, 25-30, 32-49, 63, 64, 68-70, 78 and 79 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as indefinite. Claims 1, 2, 4, 9-11, 15, 22, 51, 52, 59, 65, 67 and 69 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Holzhauser (U.S. Patent No. 4,593,995) in view of Hamanaka et al. (JP 361140423A, herein "Hamanaka"). Claim 8 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Holzhauser, as modified by Hamanaka, as applied to Claims 1, 2, 4, 9-11, 15, 22, 51, 52, 59, 65, 67 and 69, and in view of Sawano et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,411,318, herein "Sawano") and Gauthier et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,493,106, herein "Gauthier"). Claims 26, 27, 32-34, 38, 41, and 45-48 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Holzhauser, as modified by Hamanaka, as applied to Claims 1, 2, 4, 9-11, 15, 22, 51, 52, 59, 65, 65 and 69, and Raj (U.S. Patent No. 5,710,958), Nakamura (JP 403123364A), Nakashima et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,308,034, herein "Nakashima"), and Mochizuki et al. (JP 359077448A, herein "Mochizuki"). Claim 57 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Holzhauser, as modified by Hamanaka, as applied to Claims 1, 2, 4, 9-11, 15, 22, 51, 52, 59, 65, 67 and 69, and Egbert et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,788,382, herein "Egbert"). Claims 58 and 60 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Holzhauser, as modified by Hamanaka, as applied to Claims 1, 2, 4, 9-11, 15,

22, 51, 52, 59, 65, 67 and 69, and further in view of Tsusaka (U.S. Patent 6,050,732). Claim 66 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Holzhauser in view of Tsusaka. Claim 70 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Holzhauser in view of Sawano and Gauthier. Claim 79 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Holzhauser in view of Raj and Nakashima. Claims 3-6, 25, 28-30, 35-37, 39, 40, 42-44, 49 and 63 were indicated as allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C § 112, second paragraph. Claims 68 and 78 were indicated as allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Claims 12-14, 16-21, 23, 24, 50 and 53-56 were indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 71-77 and 80 were indicated as allowed over the prior art of record.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter. In light of this indication, features of Claim 12 are incorporated into amended independent Claims 1, 59, 66, 67, 69 and 70.

This amendment is submitted in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 which after final rejection permits entering of amendments canceling claims, complying with any requirement of form expressly set forth in a previous Office Action, or presenting rejected claims in better form for consideration on appeal. No new matter has been added, and all of the presented claim amendments have already been considered. It is therefore respectfully requested that the present amendment be entered under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116.

Regarding the objection to the drawings, Claims 2, 8, 25, 26, 44, 68-70, 78 and 79 are amended in light of the comments noted in the outstanding Office Action. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested this objection be withdrawn.

Regarding the objection to the specification, the specification is modified in light of the comments noted in the outstanding Office Action. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested this objection be withdrawn.

Claims 2-6, 8, 25-30, 32-49, 63, 64, 68-70, 78 and 79 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101. Claims 2, 25, 26, 44, 68-70, 78 and 79 are amended in light of the comments noted in the outstanding Office Action. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 2-6, 8, 25-30, 32-49, 63, 64, 68-70, 78 and 79 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Claims 2, 25, 26, 44, 68-70, 78 and 79 are amended in light of the comments noted in the outstanding Office Action. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 9-11, 15, 22, 51, 52, 59, 65, 67 and 69 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Holzhauser in view of Hamanaka. That rejection is respectfully traversed.

Amended independent Claim 1 is directed to an image formation device for forming an image on an image supporting member by an image formation unit that includes first and second transfer units, an inverting unit, and a maintenance unit. First and second transfer units transfer an image formed on the same image supporting member to a recording medium having front and back sides. The inverting unit inverts the front and back sides of the recording medium by an inverting path while conveying the recording medium from the first transfer unit to the second transfer unit, the inverting unit including a branched nail and conveyance rollers. The image formation unit forms first and second surface images, the first transfer unit transfers the first surface image onto a first surface of the recording medium, and the second transfer unit transfers the second surface image onto a second surface of the recording medium inverted by the inverting unit. The maintenance unit maintains the first surface image transferred onto the first surface of the recording medium by the first transfer unit and prevents disturbance at the time of inverting the recording medium.

Amended independent Claims 59, 66, 67, 69 and 70 include similar features regarding a

maintenance unit.

In a non-limiting example, Figure 1 illustrates that first and second images 105a and 105b, respectively, are formed and transferred to first and second surfaces 106a and 106b, respectively, of a paper 106. The first surface image transferred onto the first surface 106a of the paper 106 is maintained to prevent disturbances during inversion of the paper 106.

As noted in the outstanding Office Action at page 16, lines 10-13, the features of Claim 12 were indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form. As noted above, in light of this indication, the features of Claim 12 are incorporated into independent Claims 1, 59, 66, 67, 69 and 70.

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 26, 27, 32-34, 38, 41, and 45-48 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Holzhauser, as modified by Hamanaka, as applied to Claims 1, 2, 4, 9-11, 15, 22, 51, 52, 59, 65, 65 and 69, and Raj, Nakamura, Nakashima, and Mochizuki. That rejection is respectfully traversed.

Amended Claim 26, rewritten in independent form, recites an image formation device for forming an image on an image supporting member by an image formation unit. The image formation unit includes a latent image formation unit that forms an electrostatic latent image, and a developing unit that visualizes the formed electrostatic latent image with a liquid developing agent containing a toner as a visualizing particle dispersed in a liquid solvent.

Use of a developing unit that visualizes the formed electrostatic latent image with a liquid developing agent containing a toner as a visualizing particle dispersed in a liquid solvent, as recited in Claim 26 constituting the wet electrophotography process. A wet electrophotography process has novel properties that include improving image quality, reducing fixation costs by enabling fixation by drying only, reducing the toner layer thickness,

and reducing an occurrence of a fuzzy image (page 6, lines 12-16; and page 83, line 2 to page 85, line 14).

Applicant submits that amended independent Claim 26 is allowable because the cited art fails to teach or suggest a wet electrophotography process. Further, Applicant submits that it would be impossible for a person skilled in the art to reach the claimed invention recited in amended independent Claims 26 from any combination of the cited art.

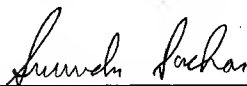
Accordingly, it is respectfully requested this rejection be withdrawn.

Addressing each of the further rejections, each of the further rejections is also traversed by the present response as no teachings in any of the further cited references to Sawano, Gauthier, Raj, Nakamura, Nakashima, Mochizuki, Egbert and Tsusaka can overcome the above-noted deficiencies of Holzhauser and Hamanaka. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that those rejections be withdrawn for similar reasons as discussed above.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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